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C O N F I D E N T I A L KIRKUK 000018

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1/29/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#) [TU](#) [JO](#) [SA](#)

SUBJECT: (SBU) SALAH AD DIN GOVERNOR WINS KRG LARGESSE

CLASSIFIED BY: BELL, RC, RC, USDOS.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

[1](#)1. (U) This is a SET Tikrit cable.

[1](#)2. (C) SUMMARY. The Governor of Salah Ad Din, a predominantly Sunni Arab province, is making inroads with Kurdish Regional Government President Barzani. Governor Hamad met with Barzani in January; he came away with a commitment for the KRG to fund medical supplies for Salah Ad Din. This followed a meeting about six months earlier which led to the Kurds funding 175 adjustable hospital beds. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)3. (C) In mid-January, Governor Hamad Shukti of Salah Ad Din Province met with KRG President Masoud Barzani in Erbil and asked the Kurdish government to provide medical supplies to Salah Ad Din's Director General (DG) of Health. The Governor said that Barzani agreed to provide medicines and other needed supplies. Gov. Hamad said this was part of his on-going relationship with Barzani, referring to early last summer, when the Kurdistan Regional Government provided 175 adjustable hospital beds to the province.

[1](#)4. (C) The Governor tells SET that the MoH in Baghdad does not provide the same level of support to Salah Ad Din that it does to the provinces in the south, and ignores his requests for additional supplies. He feels MoH views Salah Ad Din as a haven for supporters of the former regime.

[1](#)5. (C) Barzani and the Governor also spoke about Arabs currently being held in Kurdish detention centers. The Governor believes that the people who are detained in the Kurdistan Region were, in fact, detained in that region, rather than transported there, as had been happening about six months ago. However, he believes the KRG should charge them with crimes or free them. Barzani agreed to have the cases reviewed, and innocent men from Salah Ad Din returned to that province.

(U) COMMENT

[1](#)6. (C) Governor Hamad has known President Barzani for some time; he feels they have a somewhat close friendship. Hamad feels comfortable asking for medical support because Barzani offered that type of help last year, and it is widely seen as a very good, humanitarian thing to do. (REO KIRKUK COMMENT: The Kurds have their own motives. They hope eventually to annex Kirkuk province to the Kurdistan Region; they hope this will include Tozkhurmato district, which Saddam split off from Kirkuk province and attached to Salah Ad Din province. END REO KIRKUK COMMENT.) In discussion with SET officer, the Governor said nothing about supporting Kurdish political positions.

[1](#)7. (C) Governor Hamad has broadened his contacts outside of the province over the last year. He said he had visited Turkey, Jordan and Saudi Arabia in an effort to improve relations and seek financial assistance. He said that so far, the Kurdish contacts had been most fruitful, but he still held hope for the others.

BELL